

# Kansas State Fire Marshal – Fire Prevention Division

References (s): K.S.A. 31-133

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## FIRE FACT 040 – EXITS

Kansas Statute Annotated 31-133 gives the Kansas State Fire Marshal responsibility for promulgating regulations to govern the maintenance and construction of exits in all buildings in Kansas other than one and two family dwellings. Historically, the most significant loss of life in buildings from fire is when exits are locked, blocked and/or obstructed. Fire prevention inspections have documented a disturbing number of exit obstructions in schools, colleges, health care, and assembly areas in the state of Kansas.

**The ability to escape a building in an emergency is the most important life safety issue.** The Kansas Fire Prevention Code, International Building Codes, International Fire Code, and the Life Safety Code provides guidance for the construction and maintenance of exit systems in buildings. The exit system includes the exit access (corridors), the exit door, and the exit discharge.

These codes rank exits by level of importance to the occupant's safety. The highest priority is given to exits serving the largest number of occupants and the lowest priority to those exits which serve the least numbers of the total building capacity.

The ranking of exit features in order of priority is below:

- 1) Building exiting at ground level serving all occupants
- 2) Stair enclosures serving occupants above and below ground level
- 3) Protected stairs serving occupants from 3 floors
- 4) Unprotected stairs serving occupants above floor level
- 5) Exit corridors serving a single floor
- 6) Exits from assembly rooms, hazardous areas, and rooms

Each of the above exits carry specific requirements to protect the building occupants based on the priority ranking of the exit feature and the type of hazard which is most likely to occur at or near these exits. **It is the duty of owners and operators to inspect all facility exits daily to make sure all exit doors and other exit devices are in proper working condition and are available for immediate use.**

Self Inspection Guide:

- All exit doors are unlocked (See Door Locking Fire Fact)
- All exit doors are fully operational and maintained
- Required exit access, exit, and exit discharge are maintained free of obstructions or impediments to full instant use
- The exit discharge is a hard surface that extends from the exit to the public way that can be cleared of snow, ice, and other impediments